

St. Alphonsus Rodriguez Church – Confirmation Retreat 2026

When: March 14 (Saturday), 9 AM – 5 PM

Where: Msgr. O'Dwyer Retreat Center – 15523 York Road, Sparks, MD 21152

Cost: \$60 per candidate

Registration/Permission Form: [CLICK HERE](#) or follow the link provided on the Hub. Please register your child by no later than March 1.

Payment: Upon submission of the registration, you will be automatically redirected to Give Central to submit payment. You can also access the payment page directly by clicking [HERE](#). If you're unable to pay the retreat fee, do not hesitate to reach out so we can discuss possible options. Inability to pay will not be prohibitive of your child attending the retreat!

In case of emergency: If you need to reach me or your child immediately at any time during the retreat, the best way to do so will be to call my cell phone at (443) 805-5137. You may also call Susan Baldwin at (410) 499-5773.

Family Letters: This is a *surprise* letter for our candidates – DO NOT tell them about it! Candidates will open and read their letters towards the end of the retreat. Letters can be written by anyone in the candidate's life – at the very least we recommend having letters written from the candidate's parents and sponsor. Letters from siblings, grandparents, close friends of the family, or anyone else you'd like to include will all be accepted. These letters can express love, support, and hope for your child's future. They can include prayers for your child to grow in their faith and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. You can express congratulations and share your joy for your child's upcoming Confirmation. You can ask God to bless your child with strength, love, and guidance. What you include in your letter, its length, etc. is all up to you!

Once you've written your letter, email it to Clare at clare@stalchurch.org, drop it off to the Parish Center, or mail it in – the address is 10800 Old Court Rd., Woodstock, MD 21163. Letters *will not be read* beyond what is needed to ensure the correct child receives it. Please have all letters submitted by March 8.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up: Parents are responsible for getting their child to and from the retreat house. No transportation or carpooling will be provided through St. Alphonsus.

Meals: The only meal included is lunch. Snacks and drinks will also be provided. If your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions, please indicate them in the space provided on the registration. The retreat house is very accommodating to any and all allergies/dietary restrictions.

I recommend that all children bring a water bottle, clearly labeled with their name.

Attire: Children should be comfortable, as we will be doing a lot of moving around. Sweatpants, leggings, t-shirts, and sweatshirts are all acceptable as long as they're appropriate (no graphic images, cut-outs, etc.). Due to the nature of some activities and games, closed-toed shoes are recommended. Please ensure that whatever your child wears is weather appropriate. Regardless of the temperature forecast, I recommend a jacket just in case.

Cell Phones: The purpose of retreat is to have the candidates *retreat*. To get away from the stresses of daily life, social media, gossiping group texts, and the like. To help everyone get the most out of the retreat as possible, we will be collecting cell phones upon arrival and they will not be returned until pick-up (preferably, we would encourage them to be left at home entirely). While we know this will likely be difficult for many children, we strongly believe that it will make their retreat experience all the more worthwhile.

If there is ever a time during the retreat when your child needs or wants to call home, they will absolutely have access to their cell phone in order to do that. If there is a reason you would like your child to keep their phone in their possession for the duration of the retreat, please let me know.

Retreat House Rules and Policies: There are certain rules and policies of the retreat house that, if broken, will result in your child needing to be picked-up *immediately* and further disciplinary action taken upon conclusion of the retreat. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Any child found in the dormitory wing of the house. This area is off limits for our group since we are not staying overnight.

2. Any child found in the pool-area. This area is fenced-off.
3. Crossing York Road.

Mass: We will end in Mass at 4 PM. Parents and other family members are encouraged to join us! If you plan to attend, please let me know in advance so we can plan accordingly.

I am looking forward to this experience, and I hope your child is as well! Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Clare Kinsey
Director of Youth & Family Formation
clare@stalchurch.org